UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/017,242	12/14/2001	Douglas B. Quine	F-419	1538

919	7590	03/06/2006

PITNEY BOWES INC.
35 WATERVIEW DRIVE
P.O. BOX 3000
MSC 26-22
SHELTON, CT 06484-8000

EXAMINER
NASH, LASHANYA RENEE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2153	

DATE MAILED: 03/06/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 10/03)

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	10/017,242	QUINE ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	LaShanya R. Nash	2153	

-- *The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address* --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>06 December 2005</u>.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL.**   2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) <u>1,3-9 and 12-25</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☒ Claim(s) <u>23 and 24</u> is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) <u>1,3-9,12-18,20-22 and 25</u> is/are rejected.

7)☒ Claim(s) <u>19</u> is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All   b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

This action is in response to an Amendment filed December 6, 2005. Claims 1,3-9, and 12-25 are presented for further consideration.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments, see *Remarks* (page 12) filed December 6, 2005, with respect to claim 19 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the prior art rejection under 35 USC 103(a) with respect to these aforementioned claim has been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1 and 25 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In considering the Applicant's arguments the following factual remarks are noted.

(I)   Applicant contends that Tsukui and Holleran do not show or suggest determining formatting rules from a group of formatting rules.

(II)   Applicant contends that Tsukui fails to show contemplating sub-portions of the identifier portion of the e-mail addresses

(III)   Applicant contends that Mann is a nonanalogous art.

In considering (I) Applicant contends that Tsukui does not show or suggest determining formatting rules <u>from a group of formatting rules</u>. Examiner respectfully disagrees. Tsukui expressly discloses associating predefined arrangements of domain

names and sub-domain names (i.e. format rules) in order to subsequently accomplish

determination of an e-mail address, (column 2, lines 6-11; column 6, line 55-column 7,

line 18). Examiner asserts that Tsukui discloses determining from a group of the

aforementioned arrangement of domain names and sub-domain names (i.e. format

rules), (Figure 8). Specifically, Tsukui discloses that based on the domain name

extracted from an e-mail address string (e.g. *mei*), the formatting rule associated with

the residual e-mail address string is selected from a group of possibilities (e.g.

Tsukui@*mei.rdmg_mgcs* or Tsukui@*mei.rdnn_mgcs*). Therefore, Examiner maintains

rejections of claims under Tsukui in view if Holleran (in addition to other cited

references), as set forth below in the office action.

In considering (II) Applicant contends that Tsukui fails to show contemplating

sub-portions of the identifier portion of the e-mail addresses. Examiner respectively

disagrees. Examiner applies the interpretation of identifier portion of the e-mail address

as the residual e-mail string separated from the top domain name, which is inclusive of

the sub-domain and name portions of an e-mail addresses, as disclosed by Tsukui (i.e.

sub-domain 1, sub-domain 2, user name; Figure 4;Figure 5; column5, lines 39-55). It

follows that Tsukui discloses comparing a first sub-portion (i.e. sub-domain, Figure 4) of

the identifier portion of an e-mail address to the list of known first names, (column 4,

lines 42 to column 5, line 4); and comparing a second sub-portion (i.e. name, Figure 4)

of the identifier portion to the list of known last names, (column 5, lines 5-59). Therefore,

Examiner maintains rejections of claims under Tsukui in view if Holleran (in addition to other cited references), as set forth below in the office action.

In considering (III), Applicant contends that Mann is a nonanalogous art. Examiner respectfully disagrees. Examiner notes that it has been held that a prior art reference must either be in the field of applicant's endeavor or, if not, then be reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the applicant was concerned, in order to be relied upon as a basis for rejection of the claimed invention. See *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, Mann is clearly in the field of Applicant's endeavor which is related to facilitating domain names of electronic mail systems (Mann; column 1, lines 9-33).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1,7,9, and 12-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsukui et al. (US Patent 6,557,045) in view of Holleran et al. (US Patent 5,752,059), hereinafter referred to as Tsukui and Holleran respectively.

In reference to claim 1,Tsukui explicitly discloses a method for determining the format of an email address based on an corresponding domain name, in order to

prevent erroneous input occurrences of email addresses (abstract; column 2, lines 3-5; and Figures 2-4). Tsukui further discloses:

- A method (column 3, lines 49-50 and Figure 3) for determining an e-mail address formatting rule (i.e. predefined e-mail address segment, Figure 8) corresponding to a domain name (i.e. top domain name, Figure 8), (column 1, line 39 to column 2, line 28), the method comprising:

- Gathering e-mail address data (i.e. character string/email address, Figure 4) corresponding to the domain name, (column 2, lines 16-28; column 3, lines 50-67; Figure 3-items 301-302);

- Determining the e-mail address formatting rule (column 7, lines 7-40) from a group of formatting rules (i.e. Figure 8) based on the gathered e-mail address data, (column 4, line 1 to column 5, line 39 and Figure 3-items 304-311); and

- Electronically storing (i.e. RAM, Figure 1-item 106) an association of the e-mail address formatting rule with the domain name, (column 5, lines 40-56, Figure 3-item 312).

However, the reference fails to explicitly show determining a formatting rule for the unique identifier portion of the email address. Nonetheless, it would have been obvious to accordingly modify the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui for one of ordinary skill in the art, as further disclosed by Holleran.

In an analogous art, Holleran discloses a method for representing electronic mail addresses for users, (abstract). Holleran further discloses the method comprises

determining a formatting rule (i.e. syntax template; Figure 7) for the unique identifier

portion (i.e. Name string/everything in front of the "@" character; Figures 6a-6b&12a-

12b) of the email address (columns 4-9). One of ordinary skill in the art would have

been so motivated to accordingly modify the aforementioned method of Tsukui so as to

allow users to enter e-mail addresses in the simplest and most appropriate way when

the user does not know the proper syntax (i.e. rule), thereby increasing ease of use,

(Holleran column 3, lines 1-22).

In reference to claim 7, Tsukui further discloses the method wherein the e-mail

address data comprises a first e-mail address data (i.e. character string/email address,

Figure 4), and the step of determining the e-mail address formatting rule further

comprises: parsing a domain portion (i.e. top domain name, Figure 4) of the first e-mail

address, (column 4, lines 1-42); parsing an identifier portion (i.e. sub-address, Figure 4)

of the first e-mail address, (column 4, line 44 to column 5, lines 21); and determining

whether a portion is consistent with one or more known e-mail address formatting rules

from a group of at least two known e-mail address formatting rules, (column 5, lines 2-

56; Figure 8). Holleran shows determining whether the identifier portion is consistent

with one or more known e-mail address formatting rules, (Figure 13-items 1318-1322;

columns 9-10).

In reference to claim 9, Tsukui discloses the method wherein the step of determining whether the identifier portion is consistent with one or more known e-mail address formatting rules further comprises: comparing the identifier portion to a list of known names (i.e. Figure 5, column 5, lines 5-21); identifying some

or all the identifier portion as consistent with one or more known names (column 5, lines 5-21); determining whether the identifier portion is consistent with one or more known e-mail address formatting rules that are a function addressees' names (i.e. e-mail address of received e-mail, column 2, lines 16-23), (column 5, lines 22-56, column 7, lines 7-40).

In reference to claim 12, Tsukui discloses the method wherein the list of known names includes first names and last names (i.e. user names, Figure 5), and the step of comparing the identifier portion to a list of known names further comprises: comparing a first sub-portion (i.e. sub-domain, Figure 4) of the identifier portion to the list of known first names, (column 4, lines 42 to column 5, line 4); and comparing a second sub-portion (i.e. name, Figure 4) of the identifier portion to the list of known last names, (column 5, lines 5-59).

In reference to claim 13, Tsukui discloses the method wherein the fist sub-portion is separated from the second sub-portion by a separator character, (i.e. ".", "@", column 4, lines 58-60 and column 5, lines 22-27).

Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsukui et al. (US Patent 6,5557,045) in view of Mann et al. (US Patent 6,298,341) and Holleran et al. (US Patent 5,752,059), hereinafter referred to as Tsukui and Mann and Holleran respectively.

In reference to claim 25, Tsukui explicitly discloses a method for determining the format of an email address based on an corresponding domain name, in order to prevent erroneous input occurrences of email addresses (abstract; column 2, lines 3-5; and Figures 2-4). Tsukui further discloses:

- A method (column 3, lines 49-50 and Figure 3) for determining an e-mail address formatting rule (i.e. predefined e-mail address segment, Figure 8) corresponding to a domain name (i.e. top domain name, Figure 8), (column 1, line 39 to column 2, line 28), the method comprising:

- Gathering e-mail address data (i.e. character string/email address, Figure 4) corresponding to the domain name, (column 2, lines 16-28; column 3, lines 50-67; Figure 3-items 301-302);

- Determining the e-mail address formatting rule (column 7, lines 7-40) for the unique identifier portion of the based on the gathered e-mail address data, (column 4, line 1 to column 5, line 39 and Figure 3-items 304-311); and

- Electronically storing (i.e. RAM, Figure 1-item 106) an association of the e-mail address formatting rule with the domain name, (column 5, lines 40-56, Figure 3-item 312).

However, the reference fails to show the step of gathering e-mail data further comprises the steps of: providing a domain registration interface to a party having authority for the domain name the domain registration interface including an interface for indicating one or more e-mail address formatting rules associated with the domain name and gathering the one or more e-mail address formatting rules associated with the domain name from the domain registration interface. Nonetheless, it would have been obvious to accordingly modify the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui for one of ordinary skill in the art, as further disclosed by Mann.

In an analogous art, Mann discloses a method for generating domain names and for facilitating registration and transfer of these aforementioned domain names (abstract). Mann further discloses the method comprises: providing a domain registration interface (Figure 5a) to a party having authority for the domain name the domain registration interface including an interface for indicating one or more e-mail address formatting rules associated with the domain name (i.e. root) and gathering the one or more e-mail address formatting rules associated with the domain name from the domain registration interface, (columns 4-7). One of ordinary skill in the art would have been so motivated to accordingly modify the aforementioned method of Tsukui so as to further automate domain name selection, thereby increasing efficiency (Mann column 2, lines 18-29). However, the reference fails to explicitly show determining a formatting rule for the unique identifier portion of the email address. Nonetheless, it would have been obvious to accordingly modify the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui for one of ordinary skill in the art, as further disclosed by Holleran.

In an analogous art, Holleran discloses a method for representing electronic mail

addresses for users, (abstract). Holleran further discloses the method comprises

determining a formatting rule (i.e. syntax template; Figure 7) for the unique identifier

portion (i.e. Name string/everything in front of the "@" character; Figures 6a-6b&12a-

12b) of the email address (columns 4-9). One of ordinary skill in the art would have

been so motivated to accordingly modify the aforementioned method of Tsukui so as to

allow users to enter e-mail addresses in the simplest and most appropriate way when

the user does not know the proper syntax (i.e. rule), thereby increasing ease of use,

(Holleran column 3, lines 1-22).

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Tsukui and Holleran as applied to claim 1 above, in view of Tsuei (US Patent

6,654,779), hereinafter referred to as Tsuei.

In reference to claim 3, Tsukui explicitly discloses substantial features of the

claimed invention specifically sorting registered (i.e. entered) email addresses by

domain name, (column 1, lines 42-54 and column 2, lines 16-28). However, Tsukui is

silent on the method comprising registering e-mail addresses pursuant to an e-mail

forwarding service. Nonetheless, this would have been an obvious modification to the

aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran, for one of ordinary skill in

the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tsuei.

In an analogous art, Tsuei discloses a method for e-mail address change

management (abstract). Tsuei further discloses that this method comprises registering

e-mail addresses pursuant to an e-mail forwarding service, (column 2, lines 28-49 and

column 6, lines 16-43). This modifications to the method disclosed by Tsukui and

Holleran would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the

invention, because one would have been so motivated to "facilitate delivery of e-mail

when a person obtains a new address and his or her old e-mail address becomes

invalid", thereby increasing reliability for receiving intended e-mails, (Tsuei column 2,

lines 60-63).

Claims 4-6, 8, and 20-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Tsukui and Holleran as applied to claim 1 above, in view of

Tafoya et al. (US Patent 6,829,607), hereinafter referred to as Tafoya.

In reference to claim 4, although Tsukui explicitly discloses substantial features

of the claimed invention, the reference does not disclose the method wherein the step of

gathering e-mail address data further comprises the steps of accessing public e-mail

address listings, and storing e-mail addresses from the public e-mail address listings.

Nonetheless, these would have been obvious modifications to the aforementioned

method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the

time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail

address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input,

(abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the

method comprises dynamically creating an e-mail address resolution list via accessing

public e-mail address listings (i.e. database mail store listings located on public servers, column 7, lines 21-64), and storing e-mail addresses from the public e-mail address listings, (column 7, line 65 to column 8, line 18). These modifications to the method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to employ a method that "not only utilizes email user's entries, but also other known information that is not dependent on the entries to automatically resolve email address", and thereby increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 2, lines 1-5 and column 4, lines 41-46).

In reference to claim 5, although Tsukui explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention, the reference does not disclose the method wherein the step of gathering e-mail address data further comprises the steps of gathering e-mail addresses from one or more e-mail address books. Nonetheless, this would have been an obvious modification to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises dynamically creating an e-mail address resolution list via gathering e-mail addresses from one or more e-mail address books, (column 7, lines 22-32). This

modification to the method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran would have been

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would

have been so motivated to employ a method that "not only utilizes email user's entries,

but also other known information that is not dependent on the entries to automatically

resolve email address", and thereby increasing method accuracy through suggesting

the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 2, lines 1-5 and column 4,

lines 41-46).

In reference to claim 6, Tsukui and Tafoya show the method wherein the step of

gathering e-mail address from one or more e-mail address books further comprises

performing address correction on the one or more e-mail address books (i.e. data store

addresses) and informing an address-book owner of any corrections (i.e. resolution

address entries) to be made on the one or more e-mail address books, (Tafoya Figure

5-item; column 13, lines 30-36).

In reference to claim 8, Tsukui explicitly discloses substantial features of the

claimed invention specifically the method wherein determining the e-mail address

formatting rule further comprises: for a plurality of e-mail addresses having the same

domain portion (i.e. top domain name, Figure 4) as the first e-mail address, (column 4,

line 1-42) performing the steps of parsing a plurality of identifier portions (i.e. sub-

address, Figure 4) of the plurality of e-mail address, (column 4, lines 44 to column 5,

line 21); determining whether the plurality of identifier portions are consistent with

known e-mail address formatting rules, (column 5, lines 2-56); and recording the known e-mail address formatting rules that are determined to be consistent with the plurality of identifier portions, (column 5, lines 22-59). However, the reference does not discloses the method counting a <u>frequency</u> at which particular known e-mail formatting rules were found to be consistent with the plurality of identifier portions, and selecting from the recorded known e-mail address formatting rules, the e-mail address formatting rule for the domain name, based on the counted frequency. Nonetheless, these would have been obvious modifications to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises determining the most likely e-address for resolution via counting a frequency of use associated with a particularly e-mail address, (column 7, line 65 to column 8, line 9 and column 8, lines 52-65) and subsequently selecting the most likely resolved e-mail address based on the counted frequency, (column 13, lines 11-17 and column 13, lines 45-64). These modifications to the method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 13, lines 13-17).

In reference to claim 20, Tsukui explicitly discloses substantial features of the claimed invention specifically the method wherein the step of gathering e-mail address data corresponding to the domain name includes: gathering an e-mail address to whom a message is intended at the e-mail address, (i.e. e-mail address of received e-mail; column 2, lines 16-23) and the step of determining the e-mail address formatting rule based on the gathered e-mail address data further includes comparing the e-mail address to derive the e-mail address formatting rule, (column 5, lines 22-56). However, the reference does not discloses the method gathering addressee information about an addressee to whom a message is intended and comparing the addressee information to the e-mail address to derive the e-mail address formatting rule. Nonetheless, these would have been obvious modifications to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran, for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input, (abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the method comprises method comprises dynamically creating an e-mail address resolution list via gathering addressee information (i.e. distribution list, contact information, friendly name) about an addressee to whom a message is intended, (column 7, lines 22-64) and comparing the addressee information to the e-mail address to derive the most likely e-mail address formatting rule (i.e. completion information). These modifications to the

method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran would have been obvious to one of

ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because one would have been so

motivated to increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail

address correction, (Tafoya column 13, lines 13-17).

In reference to claim 21, Tsukui and Tafoya show the method wherein the

addressee information is a name of the addressee (i.e. friendly name, Tafoya column 7,

lines 47-54).

In reference to claim 22, Tsukui and Tafoya show the method wherein the step of

gathering e-mail address data includes gathering the addressee information from an

address book, (Tafoya column 7, lines 22-55).

**Claims 14 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable
over Tsukui and Holleran as applied to claim 1 above, in view of Hou et al. (US
Patent 5,329,405), hereinafter referred to as Hou.**

In reference to claim 14, Tsukui explicitly discloses substantial features of the

claimed invention specifically the method wherein the identifier portion has a integer

quantity of m characters (i.e. "character by character"; Figure 4; column 3, lines 59-63),

and wherein the step of determining whether the identifier portion is consistent with one

or more known e-mail address formatting rules further comprises: comparing the first

characters of the identifier portion to a list of known names to determine whether the

first characters of the identifier portion are consistent with the first characters in one or more names on the list of known names, (column 4, lines 42 to column 5, lines 27); identifying whether the one or more names which were found to be consistent with the first characters are first names or last names (i.e. name of user; Figure 5; and column 5, lines 5-39); and determining an identifier portion format (Figure 8) as having a beginning character group being in a first or last name, as identified (column 5, lines 33- 36 and column 7, lines 7-17). However the reference does not disclose the method wherein the identifier portion quantity of m characters is smaller than or equal to m; for a particular value of n, recording whether the first n characters of the identifier portion are consistent with the first n characters of the one or more names on the list of known names; changing the value of n, but not to be greater than m, and repeating steps (a) and (b); and identifying values of n for which the identifier portion is consistent with the one or more names on the list of known names, including a maximum number of first characters for which the identifier portion is consistent with the one or more names on the list of known names; and determining a character group being up to the maximum number of characters. Nonetheless, this common character string matching algorithm was well known in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Hou. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to accordingly modify the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui and Holleran.

In an analogous art, Hou discloses a method for matching characters of one data string against characters of another string, so as to find the longest matching string

(abstract and column 2, lines 30-43). Hou further discloses the longest matching string

method to comprise: a data string with a quantity of m characters (i.e. input string;

Figure 8-item 40; column 4, lines 24-26), and an integer n (i.e. iteration

number/compare cycle) that is smaller than or equal to m (column 2, lines 2, lines 58-

59); for a particular value of n (i.e. length counter/match length; Figure 8-item 320)

recording whether the first n characters of the data string are consistent with the first n

characters of the one or more names (i.e. stored data string; Figure 8-item 48), (column

4, lines 24-46); changing the value of n, but not to be greater than m, and repeating

steps (a) and (b) (i.e. iteration; column 2, lines 35-41; and column 4, lines 47-51); and

identifying values of n for which the data string is consistent with the one or more stored

data string, including a maximum number of first characters (i.e. longest match) for

which the data string is consistent with the one or more stored data string, (column 2,

lines 54-58 and column 4, lines 52-63); and determining a character group being up to

the maximum number of characters, (i.e. longest matching string; column 4, line 64 to

column 5, line 10). These modifications to the method as disclosed by Tsukui and

Holleran would have been obvious, because one of ordinary skill in the art would have

been so motivated to employ an established algorithm that "enables rapid and efficient

variable length string matching", (Hou column 3, lines 12-15).

In reference to claim 16, Tsukui and Hou show the method wherein the step of

determining whether the identifier portion is consistent with one or more known e-mail

address formatting rules further comprises: comparing a remainder group of characters

(i.e. sub-domain name; Tsukui Figure 4), after the beginning character group, to the list

of known names, (Tsukui column 4, lines 41-60); identifying whether the remainder

group of characters is consistent with beginnings of one or more names from the list of

known names (Tsukui column 4, line 61 to column 5, line 4); identifying characters of

the remainder group which were found to be consistent with the beginnings of one or

more names from the list of known names, and identifying whether the remainder group

of characters is consistent with first or last names from the list of known names, (Tsukui

column 5, lines 16-56) ;and determining the identifier portion format (Tsukui Figure 8)

as having the remainder group having the characters comprising the beginning letters of

first or last names, as identified , the remainder quantity of characters positioned after

the beginning character group (i.e. user name), (Tsukui column 7, lines 7-25); and

identifying a remainder maximum quantity of characters (i.e. longest match string, Hou

column 2, lines 30-43).

Claims 15 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Tsukui and Holleran in view of Hou as applied to claim 14

above, and further in view of Tafoya et al. (US Patent 6,829,607), hereinafter

referred to as Tafoya.

In reference to claim 15, Tsukui, Holleran, and Hou disclose substantial features

of the claimed invention specifically the method further comprising the steps of:

performing steps (a) through (f) for a plurality of e-mail addresses having the same

domain portion (Tsukui column 5, lines 39-55); and determining a format rule for the

domain including first or last name (Tsukui column 5, lines 16-56) and the maximum

numbers of characters (i.e. longest match string, Hou column 2, lines 30-43). However,

the references do not disclose determining the formatting rule for the domain name,

based on a counted frequency. Nonetheless, this would have been an obvious

modification to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui, Holleran, and Hou

for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by

Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail

address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input,

(abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the

method comprises determining the most likely e-address for resolution via counting a

frequency of use associated with a particularly e-mail address, (column 7, line 65 to

column 8, line 9 and column 8, lines 52-65) and subsequently selecting the most likely

resolved e-mail address based on the counted frequency, (column 13, lines 11-17 and

column 13, lines 45-64). This modification to the method as disclosed by Tsukui,

Holleran, and Hou would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time

of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to increasing method

accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column

13, lines 13-17).

In reference to claim 17, although Tsukui, Holleran, and Hou show substantial

features of the claimed invention, the references do not disclose the method wherein

the step of determining the identifier portion format further includes choosing the

identifier portion format for the beginning character group and the remainder group such

that they do not both correspond to a same name type, the same name type being last

name or first name. Nonetheless, this would have been an obvious modification to the

aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui, Holleran, and Hou, for one of ordinary

skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail

address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input,

(abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the

method comprises choosing the e-mail format rule (i.e. resolution list) so that they do

not correspond to a same name type (i.e. identical email addresses or contacts),

(column 9, lines 27-39). This modification to the method as disclosed by Tsukui,

Holleran, and Hou would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time

of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to eliminate duplicate

email address entries so as to increasing method accuracy through suggesting the most

likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column 13, lines 13-17).

In reference to claim 18, Tsukui and Hou disclose substantial features of the

claimed invention specifically the method further comprising the steps of: performing

steps (a) through (k) for a plurality of e-mail addresses having the same domain portion

(Tsukui column 5, lines 39-55); and determining a format rule for the domain including

those of beginning character groups and remainder groups for the plurality of e-mail

addresses, (Tsukui column 5, lines 16-56 and column 7, lines 7-25). However, the

references do not disclose determining the formatting rule for the domain name, based

on a counted frequency of identifier portion formats. Nonetheless, this would have been

an obvious modification to the aforementioned method as disclosed by Tsukui, Holleran,

and Hou for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, as further

evidenced by Tafoya.

In an analogous art, Tafoya discloses a method for automatically resolving e-mail

address, so as to prevent undelivered e-mail messages due to incorrect user-input,

(abstract and column 3, line 55 to column 4, line 50). Tafoya further discloses that the

method comprises determining the most likely e-address for resolution via counting a

frequency of use associated with a particularly e-mail address, (column 7, line 65 to

column 8, line 9 and column 8, lines 52-65) and subsequently selecting the most likely

resolved e-mail address based on the counted frequency, (column 13, lines 11-17 and

column 13, lines 45-64). This modification to the method as disclosed by Tsukui,

Holleran, and Hou would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time

of the invention, because one would have been so motivated to increasing method

accuracy through suggesting the most likely e-mail address correction, (Tafoya column

13, lines 13-17).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 23 and 24 are identified as allowable subject matter. The following is a

statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The aforementioned

claims describe a unique method for determining e-mail address formatting rules

through the application of probability assigned to a gathered list of known names and a

probability assigned to the previously determined e-mail address format rules.

Applicable prior are discloses determining e-mail address formats through employing a

probability (i.e. weight) based on frequency, but only as applied to entries of an e-mail

address resolution list. As a result, the aforementioned claims indicate a non-obvious

methodology over the prior art.

Claim 19 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but

would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the

base claim and any intervening claims. The aforementioned claim describe a unique

method for determining e-mail address formatting rules that are solely based on the

name portion of a unique identifier portion of the email address. Applicable prior art

discloses determining e-mail address format rules that are based on portions of the e-

mail address. However, the aforementioned portions consist of the name of the e-mail

address, but also sub-domain portions. Examiner additionally suggests amending

independent claims to incorporate limitations that clearly indicate that the identifier

portion of the e-mail refers to a user name (i.e. not portions or sub-portions of the

domain), and also limitations that clearly indicate the format rules [i.e. claim 19]

regarding these user name sections of the identifier portion of the e-mail address.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a). A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.
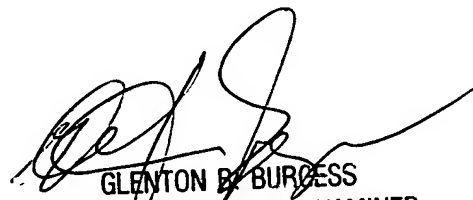
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LaShanya R Nash whose telephone number is (571) 272-3957. The examiner can normally be reached on 9am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Glenton Burgess can be reached on (571) 272-3949. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

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you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LaShanya Nash
Art Unit, 2153
March 1, 2006

GLENTON B. BURGESS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100